

THE FRONT PORCH

All the happy happenings at Cotton Grove Estate



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The 3 Stages Of Dementia: What To Expect As The Disease Progresses

A major challenge and source of stress when dealing with Alzheimer's and dementia is the uncertainty. However, some of the anxiety surrounding this topic can be alleviated by understanding the different stages of the disease: early, middle, and late.

While no one can predict exactly what will happen with your older adult's cognitive ability, behavior, or preferences when these changes happen, understanding the three stages of dementia can help prepare you so you may start planning accordingly for the future.

Typically, these stages apply to all types of dementia, including Alzheimer's. It's important to remember, though, that someone with dementia may not always fit into a specific box or go through each and every stage as described, as the progression of dementia is unique and different for each person.

STAGE 1: Early - mild dementia

In the early stage, it is likely that a person with dementia is still able to live independently.

For example, they might still be able to drive themselves around town to places like the grocery store, the salon, and the doctor's office.

They may still do their own shopping, prepare their own meals, do their own laundry, and go for visits with their friends and family.

They can likely still work and socialize as normal.

However, they will probably experience noticeable memory lapses.

Oftentimes the older adult will start to forget familiar words or the location of everyday objects.

Ultimately, others will start to notice that the person is having difficulty, experiencing memory loss, or that something "seems off."

In a thorough medical exam, doctors may be able to detect problems with memory or concentration.



Symptoms may include:

- Struggling to find the right word or name
- Finding it difficult to perform everyday tasks in social or work settings
- Forgetting something that they just read
- Frequently losing or misplacing things
- Increasing trouble with planning or organizing
- Making decisions with uncharacteristically poor judgement

STAGE 2: Middle - moderate dementia

The middle stage of dementia is usually the longest and can last for many years.

As dementia progresses, the person will need an increasing level of care.

In this stage, you might notice that they get words mixed up, are often frustrated or angry, or act in unexpected ways, like refusing to bathe.

Damage in the brain can make it difficult to express themselves and perform everyday tasks.



Symptoms may include:

- Forgetting things that happened recently or major life events
- Being moody or withdrawn, especially in social situations or when something requires too much thought
- Not being able to remember significant details about their life, like their address, telephone number, the high school they went to, etc.
- Getting confused about where they are or what day it is
- For some, trouble with incontinence
- Changing sleep patterns, like sleeping during the day and being restless at night
- An increased risk of wandering and getting lost
- Personality and behavior changes, including paranoia, delusions, and compulsive, repetitive behavior like hand-wringing

STAGE 3: Late-stage dementia

In the final stage of dementia, the sufferer will progressively lose their ability to engage in the world, to hold conversations, and to control their muscles.

They may still be able to talk, but communicating and expressing thoughts becomes difficult – even for something as basic as telling you that they're in pain.

As their memory and cognitive skills worsen, you are likely to see significant personality changes or the fading of personality altogether.

At this stage, people with dementia typically:

- Need 24/7 help with daily activities and personal care
- Have increasing difficulty communicating
- Lose awareness of recent experiences and their surroundings
- Gradually and progressively lose physical abilities, including the ability to walk, sit, and swallow
- Become more likely to develop infections



Keep in mind that a person with dementia doesn't always fit into one stage; dementia affects each person in a unique way and changes different parts of the brain at different points in the disease progression. Plus, different types of dementia tend to have different symptoms.

But even if the stages aren't exact and the symptoms can be unpredictable, being able to plan ahead is essential.

Being financially prepared for increasing care needs is a necessity. And on an emotional level, having an idea of what symptoms to expect helps you find ways to cope with challenging behaviors.

Read more at [DailyCaring.com](https://www.dailycaring.com)



Visitation Policy Updates

At the beginning of January, we made the difficult - yet necessary - decision to enter quarantine at Cotton Grove Estate. For a period of time, no outside visitors were permitted on the property.

We realize how difficult it is to be apart from your loved ones, so please know that we do not take these decisions lightly! We walk a fine line between keeping our residents safe, while also helping them to maintain their independence and important relationships. After all, a visit from a close family member or treasured friend can be just as life-giving as your daily dose of vitamin C!

At the same time, we must adhere to the most up-to-date guidelines put forth by state and federal agencies, or risk losing our licensing. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation under the circumstances.

Fortunately, at this time, all of our precious residents and caregivers are COVID-free, which means we are able to resume visitation.

Of course, we feel it best to operate with an abundance of caution where the health and safety of our residents and team members are concerned. Thus, we will be limiting visitation to one family per house at any given time. With only six residents (at most) residing in our individual cottages, we do not foresee this causing much of an issue. However, we do apologize should it create any inconvenience for you.

In order to ensure that this visitation standard is met, would you please be so kind as to give us a call ahead of time if you're planning to stop by? This will help us monitor those who are coming and going.

Typically, we say, "Don't call before you come!" And we're quite proud of that policy. After all, it allows us to showcase the fact that our standards are always top-notch, whether we're expecting visitors or not. But for the time being, we feel it best to manage visitations as closely as possible. And as soon as that changes, we will reach out to let you know!

We also ask that you postpone visiting us if you are experiencing any signs of illness, such as fever or cough. For your reference, the CDC's list of symptoms to watch for can be found [here](#). And if you have recently had COVID, please wait until you have returned a negative test before gracing us with your presence.

Thank you so much for your continued cooperation.

We realize that these ongoing safety measures aren't any fun, but in the long run, they're a small price to pay for the health of our sweet residents. We deeply appreciate your understanding.

As always, if you have any questions at all, we are happy to discuss them with you! Our fabulous General Manager, Miss Vanessa Wilder, can be reached at (912) 424-0200.

Please do not hesitate to reach out should a concern arise!

Caregiver Spotlight: Celeste Henry

The Cotton Grove management team would like to recognize the hard work and dedication of Miss Celeste Henry.

Miss Celeste is one of the newer members of the fabulous group of women which make up our caregiving team. She has become a fast favorite among the staff, the residents, and their families!

Outside of work, Miss Celeste has built a large and loving family, of which she is very proud; she has five children and twenty grandchildren!

"She is a beautiful, hard-working mother and grandmother - a true southern belle," said Miss Celeste's daughter, Victoria.

Victoria shares a special bond with her mother, as she was the only daughter growing up with four brothers.



"She will give you the shirt off her back and feed anyone, whether she knows you or not," added Victoria. "She's an amazing woman!"

After getting to know Miss Celeste, we would have to agree!

In her spare time, Miss Celeste likes to read books, cook, and bake. But she loves nothing more than spending time with her grandchildren.

We are so grateful for you, Celeste! You make Cotton Grove Estate an even more lovely place. Thank you for joining our team and upholding the standard of excellence we strive for each day.

"She is a beautiful, hard-working mother and grandmother - a true southern belle. She will give you the shirt off her back and feed anyone, whether she knows you or not. She's an amazing woman!"





A Message From Anna

Dear family and friends,

We've been through quite a bit out at Cotton Grove Estate since the last time I wrote to you! With COVID-19 cases on the rise again in Wayne County, and another dangerous variant of the virus threatening our elderly community, we entered a temporary quarantine during the first part of January.

These measures proved successful, as all of our residents are currently safe and back to taking their usual visitors.

I am, of course, tremendously grateful for the health of our residents, but also for the amount of support their families have extended us.

I realize the depth of understanding you all have exercised during this period. Without your cooperation, my job would be very difficult, so I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for doing your part to keep Cotton Grove Estate safe. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed!

Warmly,

Anna Pittard
Owner, Cotton Grove Estate
(912) 424-6422

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ANNA JONES PITTARD
OWNER, COTTON GROVE ESTATE